

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

OMB-01 SSM-03 SAM-01 SAB-01 DHA-02 ORM-02 /080 W

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R 111435Z AUG 76

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8202

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

US SINAI MISSION 11

USMISSION USUN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE JERUSALEM 1069

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, IS, JO

SUBJECT: BETHLEHEM AREA MAYORS PROTEST LAND REQUISITION AND OTHER  
ACTIONS

1. ON AUGUST 10 MAYORS OF BETHLEHEM, BEIT JALA AND BEIT  
SAHUR CALLED ON CONSUL GENERAL TO REGISTER THEIR CONCERN  
OVER REQUISITION BY IDF OF 400 DUNAMS (APPROX 100 ACRES)  
OF LAND IN VILLAGE OF BEIT JALA. IDF HAD PREVIOUSLY  
CORDONED OFF 100 DUNAMS ON TOP OF JEBEL RAS OVERLOOKING  
THE TOWN. RECENTLY, IDF AT NIGHT FENCED IN LARGE  
ADDITIONAL AREA WITH BARBED WIRE. MILITARY ASSERT LAND IF  
FOR TRAINING BUT MAYORS CLAIM HILLY AREA UNSUITABLE  
FOR THIS PURPOSE AND NOTE PRESENCE OF SURVEYORS WHICH  
THEY SUSPECT IS  
PRELUDE TO NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT  
SIMILAR TO NEIGHBORING GILO. MAYOR OF BEIT JALA HAS  
SENT A TELEGRAM OF PROTEST TO UNSYG WALDHEIM AND THREE MAYORS  
HAVE ALSO PROTESTED TO CONSULATES IN JERUSALEM IN ADDITION

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TO MILGOV. CONSUL GENERAL TOOK NOTE OF THEIR STATEMENTS.

2. WEST BANK STRIKE RE VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT).

MAYOR FREIJ OF BETHLEHEM SAID HE HAD TAKEN INITIATIVE AS PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO PERSUADE MOST MAJOR WEST BANK CHAMBERS TO AGREE CALL OFF STRIKE PROTESTING VAT. HE EVEN OBTAINED AGREEMENT OF NABLUS MAYOR SHAKA WHO APPARENTLY WAS UNABLE TO CONVINCE NABLUS MILITANTS TO GO ALONG. FREIJ BELIEVES NABLUS AND OTHER NORTHERN WEST BANK TOWNS ARE MAKING MISTAKE IN CONTINUING STRIKE SINCE THEY WILL EVENTUALLY HAVE TO GIVE IN. HE FORESEES CONTINUING DIFFICULTY SINCE, EVEN IN UNLIKELY EVENT GOI WERE TO RELENT, MANY PALESTINIANS WOULD INSIST THAT VAT ALSO NOT BE APPLIED IN EAST JERUSALEM. OTHER TWO MAYORS THOUGHT WEST BANKERS WOULD RELUCTANTLY AGREE TO DIFFERENT TREATMENT FOR EAST JERUSALEM.

3. THREATENED TRANSFER OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS.

FREIJ REPORTED BETHLEHEM INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION NOTIFIED MAYORS OF GOI'S INTENTION AS DISCIPLINARY MEASURE TO TRANSFER 30-40 STUDENTS FROM BETHLEHEM AREA TO SCHOOLS ELTVWHERE, SOME AS FAR AS HEBRON. SOME TEACHERS WOULD ALSO BE TRANSFERRED. MAYORS FELT GOI HAD RIGHT TO TRANSFER TEACHERS BUT NOT REPEAT NOT STUDENTS.

4. SCHOLARSHIPS. MAYORS EXPRESSED THEIR WISH

THAT SCHOLARSHIPS BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR QUALIFIED WEST BANK STUDENTS TO STUDY AS UNDERGRADUATES IN THE U.S. MAYORS STATED SOVIETS AND OTHER COUNTRIES TAKE A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF WEST BANK STUDENTS WHO STUDY ABROAD AND THAT UNLESS STEPS ARE TAKEN TO ENABLE GREATER NUMBERS OF WEST BANK STUDENTS TO STUDY IN U.S., EVENTUALLY A DISPROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF WEST BANK INTELLIGENTSIA WILL BE PRODUCTS OF COMMUNIST UNIVERSITIES.

6. COMMENT: BASED ON SUBSEQUENT ON-SITE SURVEY

BY DPO, WE ARE INCLINED TO AGREE WITH MAYORS THAT RECENTLY REQUISITIONED LAND NOT REPEAT NOT VERY SUITABLE FOR MILITARY TRAINING. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT GOI INTENDS TO ESTABLISH SETTLEMENT AND EVENTUALLY BUILD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ROAD WHICH WOULD LINK WEST JERUSALEM WITH GILO, REQUISITIONED LAND IN BEIT JALA AND ETZION BLOC THEREBY PERMITTING RESIDENTS OF LATTER MAJOR SETTLEMENT

TO COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH WEST JERUSALEM BYPASSING BETHLEHEM AND REFUGEE CAMPS.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY TRAINING, WEST BANK, MAYOR, LAND NATIONALIZATION, VALUE ADDED TAXES, GENERAL STRIKES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 11 AUG 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ElyME  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976JERUSA01069  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760309-0687  
**From:** JERUSALEM  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760865/aaaaceud.tel  
**Line Count:** 114  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ElyME  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 19 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <19 MAY 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <12 OCT 2004 by ElyME>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** BETHLEHEM AREA MAYORS PROTEST LAND REQUISITION AND OTHER ACTIONS  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PBOR, SOCI, JO, IS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006